



PA/ID 1-2013
EMS OGP 113-11
August 13, 2013

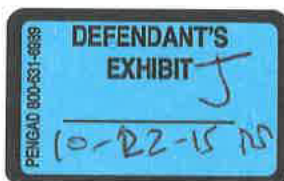
HAZING POLICY

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The New York City Fire Department (FDNY or the Department) expects all of its employees to treat one another with respect and dignity. Consistent with that principle, this Policy prohibits employees from engaging or participating in, or encouraging others to engage or participate in, any act of hazing.
- 1.2 The Department seeks to foster a professional, welcoming and safe work environment for all of its employees. Hazing is fundamentally contrary to this goal, as well as to the FDNY's core values of honor, dedication and service. Because hazing can impact a victim's ability to function at work and damage trust and confidence among co-workers, it imperils the cohesiveness of the work unit. Every employee must be afforded the opportunity to be a productive and contributing member of their work unit, free of hazing and its ill effects.
- 1.3 Hazing is not part of the FDNY's honored traditions, has no place in today's first responder organizations and will not be tolerated by the Department.

2. DEFINITION

- 2.1 Hazing is any conduct that involves an employee who causes another employee to suffer or be exposed to any activity that is cruel, abusive, humiliating, intimidating, oppressive, demeaning or harmful. Soliciting or coercing others to engage in any such activity is also considered hazing. Hazing need not involve any physical contact among or between employees; it can be, in part or wholly, verbal or psychological in nature.
- 2.2 Hazing includes, but is not limited to, the following types of conduct:
 - 2.2.1 Any form of initiation or a "rite of passage" into an employee group, unit or work location that involves the potential for, or causes, physical injury, mental harm or personal humiliation.
 - 2.2.2 Using social media to demean, intimidate, or otherwise harass another employee.
 - 2.2.3 Playing abusive tricks or engaging in acts intended to ridicule.
 - 2.2.4 Any infringement on bodily integrity.
 - 2.2.5 Any activity requiring excessive physical exertion beyond what is required to meet standards.
 - 2.2.6 Forcing or requiring the consumption of food, alcohol, drugs or any other substance.



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- 2.3 Hazing is not limited to superior-subordinate relationships. It may occur between peers or, under certain circumstances, may involve actions by junior personnel toward those more senior in rank. In all cases, such acts are prohibited.
- 2.4 Hazing does not include authorized activities such as required operational or training exercises, including probationary firefighter training, remedial training as directed by Training Academy staff or other training or instruction authorized by the Chief of Training, Chief of Operations or Chief of Department.

3. POLICY

- 3.1 The FDNY prohibits hazing of any of its employees by another employee, while on and off duty. No FDNY employee may engage in hazing or consent to be a victim of hazing. Anyone who witnesses or is made aware of any act or allegation of hazing must immediately report such information to their supervisor. Actual or implied consent to acts of hazing is not a defense to a violation of this Policy.
- 3.2 No officer or supervisor may condone or ignore hazing if the officer or supervisor knows, or reasonably should have known that hazing may or did occur. Once informed or made aware of any such incident or allegation, all officers and supervisors must report the incident, in writing, up the chain of command to the Chief of Department. Failure of an officer or supervisor to enforce this policy may result in disciplinary action against the officer or supervisor.
- 3.3 The Chief of Department, in consultation with and working in conjunction with the Bureau of Investigations and Trials (BIT), will determine what action is appropriate following a reported incident of hazing, and whether such action shall be taken within the chain of command or by BIT.
- 3.4 BIT will investigate reported hazing incidents as necessary. Any employee found to have been involved in hazing, or to have witnessed or become aware of an act of hazing and failed to report it, will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.
- 3.5 Any FDNY employee who has been hazed, or whom a supervisor or officer believes may have been subjected to hazing, will be considered a victim who is entitled to the assistance of the Bureau of Health Services (BHS) and Counseling Services Unit (CSU). An officer or supervisor who has been made aware of any acts of hazing must advise the victim of the services available to him or her that are provided by BHS and CSU.
- 3.6 The FDNY strictly prohibits retaliation against any victim of hazing, or witness who reported a hazing incident, and any offenders will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

BY ORDER OF THE FIRE COMMISSIONER AND CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT